1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

All-India worship of Agni and Sūrya.[1] Coorgs are drawn into an All-India ritual idiom which is mainly Sanskritic in character.

X

The sprinkling of rice on a person or thing is a common ritual act in Coorg, and it is one of the several acts which together form the ritual of *mūrta*. An instance of the ritual sprinkling of rice will be considered now with a view to discovering its meaning.

Birth results in pollution for the mother, the new-born infant, and the *okka* of which the mother is a member. While the other members of the polluted *okka* attain normal ritual status on the twelfth day of birth, the mother herself remains polluted till the sixtieth day. On that day, after a bath which ends her long period of pollution, she performs a certain ritual which signifies her resumption of her normal, pre-pollution duties.

One of her normal duties is the bringing of water from the domestic well into the kitchen, and the resumption of this particular duty is dramatized in '*Ganga pūja*' (worship of Ganga or Ganges). The confined woman has a bath, after which she changes into ritually pure garments. She then goes to the domestic well accompanied by two married women. First of all she salutes the sun by throwing some rice grains into the air, and this is followed by putting small quantities of rice thrice into the well. She then drops a few betel leaves, with the smooth side on top, into the well, and also empties the milk of a slit coconut into it. Finally, the confined woman and, after her, her two companions draw water from the well in vessels and carry the latter into the kitchen.

During the later stages of pregnancy, and for two months after the birth of the child, the confined woman has been freed from all domestic duties. The resumption of her domestic duties on the sixtieth day of the birth of the child is dramatized in the ritual of '*Ganga pūja*'. Her relationship with the domestic well has been broken for some time and the resumption of this relationship is not without a certain amount of 'awkwardness', as in the case of two human beings. The worship of the domestic well, the solidarity rites performed towards it, the offering of betel leaves and a coconut all make the process of resumption of contact smoother.

[1] It may be argued, however, that the attribution of sacredness to the domestic lamp and stove is derived from the worship of Agni and Sūrya, and not vice versa.

3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

342 door leading into the inner hall which is lit by the skylight formed by the junction of the four slopes of the inner roof into an inner space (mittam) which is a masonry reservoir in which rain water is collected and drained off by an underground passage. The inner roof is supported on four pillars, [352] resting on thick board slabs of jackwood upon the walls of the reservoir, and forming convenient seats for the inmates of the house, the inner rooms of which are without windows and open by small doors into the central hall only. On the side diagonally opposite to the door of the verandah, and likewise on the inner right corner, there are two doors leading to the exterior of the house. The first room of the house is occupied by the master of the house and his wife. The next room is the kitchen-dining room whence the smoke issues and fills the hole house, coating and preserving the woodwork. The small rooms of the remaining two wings are [778] tenanted by the married couples, the widows and unmarried women. One room near the left corner is set apart as sacred to the family deity. From the ceiling are suspended match-locks, the wooden bells for cattle, the trappings of pack bullocks, and other domestic utensils. The space under the [353] roof and above the wooden ceiling, which is covered with a thick layer of [312] earth to keep the rooms below dry and fireproof, serves for storing bags of [343] rice, baskets, pots and culinary provisions. There is also a deep well built with stone in the compound to supply water for cooking purposes, and another hut by the side of the paddy fields for bathing in hot water.

352 The simplicity of the habits of the Coorgs is reflected in the furniture that they use. Wooden cots are generally used, with straw, coir, or cotton mattresses and cushions, sheets, and blankets; on the floor, they have coarse mats for rubbing their feet before going to bed. Occasionally they use wooden stools. A wooden shelf is fixed to the wall in each room to keep [415] their brass vessels, plates and lamps. Rattan or wooden boxes contain their [854] clothing and jewels. There is always a spittoon in one corner of the room. [177] Where there is a baby, a rattan cradle is suspended from the ceiling within reach of the mother's bed. Young Coorgs of the present day have better houses and good furniture as also comfortable arrangements in the European style.

Internal Structure

619 The Coorgs are composed of four endogamous groups, Amma, Sanna Malla and Boddu Coorgs. The Amma and Sanna Coorgs are found in all parts of Coorg. The Malla and Sanna Coorgs are united and are no longer distinguishable. They form the principal class of Coorgs.

Exogamy

614 The Coorg clans are too many to mention. Most of them are their local house names. Some are alien. Marriage within the clan is prohibited.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5
India AW1

two rude stone structures, with the customary imprint of two feet (páda) of celestial origin! C 133 I [118] [211]

Amongst the many ridges that branch off from the Subramanya range of the Ghats the most remarkable is that, which attains its greatest height in Kóte-betta, about 9 miles north of Mercara. Its elevation is over 5000 feet, and its base covers a very large extent of country. Its summit, which is divided into two peaks, one rather pointed – the Harangal-betta—and the other broad, forms a comparatively flat table-land, while its sides are clothed with forest, and innumerable cultivated valleys occupy the recesses. Close to the apex there are two reservoirs of water, one for the use of the Brahmins and one for the Coorgs, which all the year round retain a constant supply. Close to the summit on a spacious platform is a small temple of rough granite slabs dedicated to Shiva. This hill as well as the Nárokal-betta offer, on account of their height and central position, the finest general view of Coorg, and even to the lover of nature, familiar with mountain glories in Scotland, Switzerland or Italy, no more delightful excursion could be recommended than that to these hills. C [312]

From Kóte-betta to the north is another ridge running parallel with it, the Shanthalli hills, and beyond them is a bluff hill with almost a precipitous declivity on its western face—the Múkri-betta (múku, nose) with a fine coffee plantation at its base. C [245]

The last remarkable range, that extends from the northern frontier of Coorg down to the Kávéri almost due south, is the Yélusávira hills with the Málimbi and Kanangala peak. The former is distinguished by its beautifully conical shape which strikes the eye in every part of Coorg.

The Geological formation of the Coorg mountains is indicated by the sharply defined outline of the Western Ghats, a feature characteristic of granitic rocks. The constant action

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

Felspar is very common, and yields a rich soil. Veins of it are laid bare along the banks of the Ghat roads. In many places it is reduced to a white powder, the kaolin or porcelain clay, with which marketable chunam is adulterated. Mica is frequently seen, and here and there the roads glitter with its shining scales. After heavy showers the water channels along the sides of roads which had been metalled with syenite, appear covered with a sparkling blackish sand, the hornblende of the decomposed syenite. Common quartz occurs most frequently in small pieces of uncrystalline form. The considerable amount of carbonate of lime in the ashes of the Matti tree, (Terminalia coriacea) a tree largely distributed all over the eastern parts of Coorg, proves the presence of limestone in the soil of that region.

Mines there are none in Coorg, and it would appear, that except traces of iron in the shape of oxydes no metals exist. The gold ore, which a certain adventurer recently claimed to have discovered in Coorg, proved to be only mica embedded in quartz.

Rivers and their course. From the configuration of the country already described, it is evident, that the main drainage of Coorg is in an easterly direction towards the Bay of Bengal; while the mountain torrents of the western declivities of the Ghats flow into the Indian Ocean.

The Coorg rivers are not remarkable either for width or depth, but their water supply is everywhere abundant throughout the year. As their sources are high up in the mountains and their courses over steep declivities, the streams are impelled with great rapidity over generally very rocky beds; which render them almost wholly useless for navigation of any kind, and owing to the height of their banks and the unevenness of the country, few of them allow of artificial irrigation, but the rivulets are everywhere laid under contribution.

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

from Kóte-betta drain the whole northern plateau of Coorg and add an immense bulk of water to the Kávéri. Almost every one of these mountain streams forms in its descent over rocky beds cascades of great beauty. One near Mercara, the Jesse-fall (so called in honor of a daughter of the first chaplain of Mercara) is much admired and frequently visited by picnic parties. Some of the coffee estates along the Sampáji valley are notable for pleasing cataracts.

The rivers of Coorg which fall into the Kávéri beyond the province are Hémavati (héma *Sans.* gold) and the Lakshmanatirtha. The former rises near the Bhadra river, south of Westára in the Kadúr district of Mysore, and after passing Marjarábád, it forms for a few miles the northern boundary of Coorg and joins the Kávéri in the Yedatore taluk of Mysore near the village Tippúr. The Lakshmanatirtha with its tributaries the Kakotta and Kerehole drains nearly the whole of Kiggatnád. It rises in the forest Munikádu, on the plateau of the Brahmagiris, and in its descent over an almost perpendicular mountain-wall forms a celebrated cataract, which by Brahminical priestcraft has been invested with sin cleansing virtue, and is consequently visited at the Irpu játre by thousands of superstitious devotees. The banks of this river like those of the Kávéri are of clay or mould, steep, with a sandy bottom and shaded by dense forest or bamboo clumps.

Lakes, Tanks, Wells.—Throughout Coorg there is not a lake or tank of any size worth mentioning. In Kiggatnád only there are a few natural reservoirs, called Kolli, enclosed by a belt of small trees and containing water all the year round. A tank 3 miles north of Somawarpet is notable for its picturesque rock scenery and the legend connected with it, which does not however accord with the inscription written upon a stone on the western outlet of the tank. The writing runs thus: "The King Andany has ordered this tank to be built on Tuesday the tenth day of the month of Phál-

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

312 guna in the year Párthiva. This was written by Venkadasya
703 Mallia Bomarsia at the time of Basawalinga Déva Rája
Vodea."

The legend is shortly this: "A merchant Malla Shetty of
Yelusávirashíme vowed to build this tank. When it was
[782] finished, there was no water forthcoming. Animal sacrifices
were suggested by the tank diggers and offered, but in vain.
In this distress the goddess Ganga appeared and demanded
the little finger of the Shetti. Unwilling to make this sacri-
fice, he offered the life of Akkony, his daughter-in-law instead,
whose husband was away on a journey. Akkony agreed,
took an affectionate leave of her child and parents, who were
ignorant of her intentions, and amidst great solemnities she
stepped into the tank; when Ganga made her appearance in
rushing water. Akkony's parents, hearing of the impending
sacrifice, hastened to rescue their daughter, but she refused
to leave the tank, uttered a curse upon her father and mother-
in-law and disappeared in the rising water. She then ap-
peared in a dream to her husband, who speedily returned
home, and, on hearing what had happened, killed his parents,
and with his child in his arms rushed to the tank and in des-
pair threw himself into it, when both were graciously received
by Ganga."

312 Besides the small public tanks, there are only private
wells, that yield, if dug deep enough, everywhere sweet and
clear water; but it appears, that the natives of Coorg do not
bestow enough attention on the great blessing of wholesome
water, and are often satisfied with the muddy contents of a
hole, carelessly dug by the side of their paddy-fields, though
from their own experience they assert, that most of their di-
seases are owing to the bad quality of their drinking water.

139 *Forests and their general flora and fauna.*—In Coorg extensive
forests clothe every mountain range almost up to the summit
and bamboo jungles, cover the more level eastern districts,

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

of a crocodile. Under the knotty swellings of the bark of the Matti tree small quantities of water are hidden, which the lynx-eyed Kuruba readily discovers in his jungle-wanderings during the hot season and from which providential fountains he draws a thirst-quenching draft. ⅞ The *Hony* or Kino tree (Pterocarpus marsupium) yields an excellent yellowish timber fit for exposure and a valuable brownish gum, the kino, which oozes out from the wounded stem. Chunam brought in contact with it turns bright yellow. 139 313 [312]

Teak or Tectonia grandis occupies a distinct girdle along the eastern boundary of Coorg, within the basin of the Lakshmanatirtha and in Nanjarájpatna and Yélusávirashíme taluq; but, with the exception of the Amali-topu in Kiggatnád, the teak forests in Coorg are neither so dense, nor so stately as those in Burmah, where trees of enormous size and height are found. The large and strongly nerved leaves, rough above, whitish and downy beneath, and the numerous white flowers in terminal branches on the high and many branched trunk, mark the beauty and strength of the tree. Both for house and ship building teak is the best of woods, easily worked and almost indestructible by climate or insects owing to its oily nature. Coorg teak is of most excellent quality, oily and free of heart-shake. It is a Government monopoly and sold from wood-yards at the rate of 12 Annas per cubic foot. [655]

In close proximity to teak and in an equally limited tract of dry and elevated slopes grows the *White Sandal-wood*, (Santalum album) scattered between other trees and on cultivated land. It is rather a small tree of a more or less crooked stem, but its spreading branches with tiny, light-green leaves and yellow or purple coloured small flowers give it an elegant appearance and a marked feature in the landscape. The wood is close-grained and hard, especially the duramen or heart-wood, which for these qualities and for its agreeable scent is highly prized and employed for ornamental boxes, ⅞ [322]

[Errata: This should read "draught." See corrigenda sheet, Cat. 116, p. 473 --Ed.]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AWS Coorg AWS

long yellow legs and straight yellow bill. It keeps in small flocks. The little green Heron (Butatrides Javanicus; *Kg.* kiru-póle = small crane), the Indian Waterhen (Gallinula) and the Plover or Peevit (*Kg.* uppa-títe, imitating its cry) are found in marshy places, likewise the Snipe (Gallinago stenura; *Kg.* bandu-koneya = mud squatter) whose flesh is in great estimation with the Coorgs and Europeans; also the green Sandpiper (Aclitis Ochropus) may occasionally be seen.

As there are no large tanks in Coorg, few of the *Natatores* or *swimming birds* are to be found. There is only the Wild Duck or Teal of a larger and smaller species, which the Coorgs call Kóku and Yernade-pakki; the latter dive under the water, as soon as they observe a hunter and remain submerged for a long time. Geese and Turkeys are kept domesticated, but the cold and wet monsoon weather does not agree with turkeys.

A rapid glance over the remaining portion of the Coorg Fauna will be arrested by but a few species of general interest. The *Reptiles* are represented by two kinds of Tortoises, a variety of Lizards, Snakes and Frogs.

The *Tortoises* are found in paddy-fields and small tanks. The shell of one in my possession is 11 inches long and 7 inches broad, but of a bony nature, unfit for ornamental use. Since the devastations of the coffee-borer common Lizards, Bloodsuckers, and Chameleons, all of them insect-feeders, have become of greater importance to the agriculturist. Alligators are occasionally seen in the Káveri, especially near Rámaswámy Kanawé. Last year one of 9 feet in length was caught in Beppunad with a woman's nose-ring and a silver bracelet in his stomach.

Snakes are rather plentiful in Coorg, but the subject has not yet received sufficient attention, to enable me to give the correct name of the different species. Classifying them as poisonous and harmless snakes, the native name may at least

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AWS Coorg AWS

356 The house and yard are generally kept clean and orderly,
574 and the announcement of an approaching honored visitor sets at once the broom into activity and you may arrive just in time to see the retreating Coorg damsel and have to swallow the raised dust. However, the object is attained, you perceive what attention has been paid to you.

312 A stone built deep well is usually in the compound or the
[515] water is fetched from a hole sunk by the side of the paddy-fields, and near the well is the hut for hot bathing.

357 The low caste servants have their huts at some distance
564 from the Coorg house; the meals given them they eat on
361 plantain leaves apart from their masters.
264

As already remarked the Coorg house is the domicile of all the male relatives with their wives and children belonging
591 to one parental stock. The landed property, or Jamma-pâmi,
423 is vested in the house and cannot be alienated from it, or
[476] divided amongst its members. The farm is cultivated by all
[241] the housepeople under the management of the master of the house, and the produce is divided amongst them after the Huttari feast. It often occurs, however, that an energetic member of the house or one in Government employment, acquires for himself some fields called Koppa, which are his own, and if sufficient for the support of his family, he may
591 live there and establish a new house. Others own a small
423 coffee plantation or cardamom-garden, and these individual
178 enterprises seem to be the natural transition to an impending general social reform—the breaking up of the great houses, and the independent establishment of each married couple residing near their own paddy-fields, and eating the fruit of their own labour. The indolent will then have to work for their subsistence or sink into misery, the industrious and thrifty will prosper, and after a period of no little angry strife a happier life of personal freedom and domestic felicity will be the inheritance of future generations. The only danger to be apprehended is the tendency of the rich houses absorb-

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

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[312] On the north side, a little below the temple, there is a small tank with perennial water, which is considered holy, but 100 years ago it is said to have been defiled by a Chándála woman bathing in it, when the spring ceased to flow for some time.

On the south-east ridge a cave is shown which, according to Brahminical discovery, offered an asylum to the exiled
[1825] Pándus! After their departure the cave was occupied by a tiger, which with due respect for the játre quits his abode 7 days before the feast and afterwards returns.

On the precipitous side of the rock there are nests of vultures and several hundreds of beehives.

796
788 For seven days before the Tuláasankramana in the village Mugutagéri at the foot of the hill, the ryots assemble one from each house at the Mandu and sing Coorg chants in praise of Isvara. On the night of the 7th the inhabitants of the whole
[532] nád come together, disguising themselves in masks of 18 various descriptions, they then go to the Ambala and dance and sing to the sound of the tomtom. The day following a light hollow frame, representing a horse, made of cane-work, is decked out so as to hide the lower part of the man's body who carries it, making it appear as if he rode the horse. The multitude then ascend the hill in procession, headed by the horse and a band of musicians, dance round the temple and bring their offerings of water, fruit and money.

788 The *Pálúr játre* in Kuyingherinád in honor of Pálúrappa, brother of Iggudappa, is a similar affair, which takes place in
[778] the month of April. The temple was rebuilt only a few years ago at a considerable expense and chiefly by the exertions of a Coorg official whose zeal and devotion one could wish had been employed in a better cause, especially in the education of his ignorant and superstitious nád people!

Amongst the játres beyond this country those visited by the Coorgs are four: *Subramanya* on the northern frontier of Coorg, which, in December, attracts a great number of people,

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

to be called "Ránipetta" in honour of Queen Victoria. The town, which 15 years ago was almost entirely composed of wretched thatched mud-huts, bears now, in consequence of its profitable coffee traffic and exorbitant prices permitted by free trade, the stamp of prosperity. Out of its 850 houses 281 are tiled, most of them brick built and two storied and inhabited by merchants and tradesmen. The population of 3859 souls—without the Regiment—comprises 43 different castes, but no Coorgs live in the Petta. The Petta-*Subadar's Kacheri* occupies the highest point of the town and behind it are situated the Tombs of the Coorg Rájahs (vide p. 182). Under Capt. Cole's direction Lieut. Mackenzie, the Assistant Superintendent, has greatly interested himself in the amelioration of the sanitary condition of the Petta. The streets are broad and clean; two small tanks and a number of wells and running streams supply wholesome water. Every Friday there is a market, hence Mercara is also called *Shukravára-sante* (Friday-market). In the principal street—locally the High-street—the daily requisites for food and raiment are displayed. People from Nanjarájpatna and the Mysore country bring: dry grain—such as, rági, gram, rice of the superior sorts, dál, wheat, green gram, Bengal gram—, jaggory, tamarind, potatoes, chillies, onions, garlic, turmeric, mustard, coriander, oil seeds, castor oil, sesamum oil, tobacco, betel leaves, chunam, baskets, eggs, fowl, sheep, goats, etc. Máplas from Tellicherry and Cannanore import cocoanuts, arekanuts, cocoanut oil, and dry fish; Coorgs and other ryots bring clean rice, plantains, oranges, pineapples and straw; the merchants and petty dealers spread out in their shops or in the street their merchandise: cotton, silk and woolen fabrics; potters pile up their many-shaped vessels, tailors expose their gay, ready made clothes, money-changers squat before their stores of copper coins, liquor shops attract the crowd by their gaily

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4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

Government *English School* is a temporary building near the Bangalow and a more commodious and substantial School-house should be erected. Of the four *tanks* belonging to the town, Gauri-kere contains the purest water. It is at the head of the Petta and was excavated by the orders of Dodda-Vírájender, the founder of Vírájpet. At the expense of Pál-pare Rudaya it was repaired some years ago, but people being allowed to wash and bathe in the tank, the wholesomeness of the water must be greatly impaired, and Gauri-idol $\frac{1}{A}$ which is annually thrown into it at the Gauri-feast will not restore its purity! Good drinking water, but in a small quantity, is obtained from an enclosed spring at the foot of the Bangalow hill, close to the paddy fields. The site of Vírájpet being very rocky, the industry of the people in economising every foot of cultivable land is very remarkable, but the destruction of so many coffee and orange trees by the Borer has considerably marred the once luxuriant vegetation in and around Vírájpet. In the principal street there are a few straggling cocoanut trees, but the climate is not congenial to a fertile growth.

Communication with the eastern portion of the taluq and with Mysore is maintained by two bandy roads, one through Cólepet, Anandapur and Siddápur, the other towards Bittangala and Hattúr.

Kiggatnád-taluq extends with its four Náds over the whole of south-eastern Coorg and covers an area of 400 square miles with 63 villages and the rising town Ponappet. The taluq contains 17,650 inhabitants, of whom 5,480 are Coorgs, 5,709 other Hindus and 5,818 Jungle people, such as Kurnbas and Yeravas; of the rest 417 are Mussulmans and 223 Amma-Codagas. Upon the whole the people of this taluq may be said to be in easy circumstances, as they are well provided with the necessaries of life. With the exception of the large and influential house of the late Deván Chepudira Ponnappa but little disparity in point of wealth

$\frac{1}{A}$ [Errata: This should read "and the Gauri-idol" see corrigenda, Cat. 116, P. 979 -- Analyst]